

HIS EMINENCE TAI HSU

LECTURES
IN BUDDHISM



PARIS

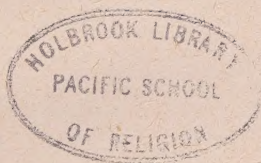
1928



GIFT OF
Kenneth James Saunders



LECTURES IN BUDDHISM

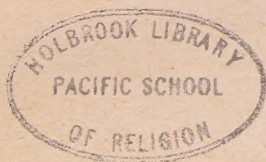


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HIS EMINENCE TAI HSU

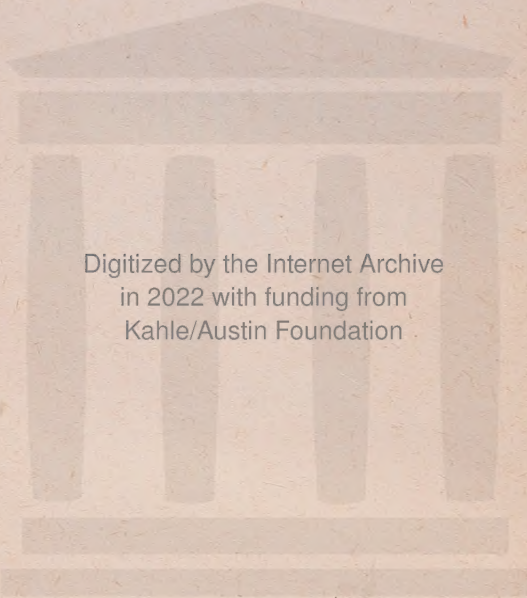
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FOREWORD

By a movement of flux and reflux thought is ever changing like the surface of the ocean. The scientist tells us that scientific truth can never be considered as final, since every thirty years or so, it has to be modified in the light of fresh discoveries.

The most recent theories of the atom tend to show that, in the last resort, matter is a form of energy, and the illusory character of the Universe is becoming more and more apparent, so that the scientific attitude of to-day is, in some ways, a reaction against the materialistic conceptions of the nineteenth century.

Philosophy seems to be following on a parallel track. Many modern thinkers assure us that matter is an illusion, due to the blindness of the Conscience, and by their conception of the fourth dimension, seem to have rediscovered those higher planes of existence which were known to the Vedantist, Taoist, and Buddhist philosophers of the past.

The transcendental character of modern thought must necessarily increase, when it is seen that Science alone can never acquire an absolute perception of the Universe.

Nowhere is this tendency more apparent than in the thought of contemporary writers such as Ouspensky, who foresees an evolution towards a plane of four dimensions, which he calls Cosmic Consciousness, and which he says, must reveal the Universe in its real light "not as dead matter governed by rigid laws, but on the contrary as entirely immaterial, entirely spiritual, and entirely alive, where death is an absurdity and everyone and everything has eternal life".

Such recent utterances of Western thought are strangely near to the Buddhist conception of the Universe, with its doctrine of the 'continuous life current' and would seem to suggest that the full tide of materialism has been reached and that a reaction is setting in.

The modern world however, despite such recent tendencies, has arrived at a critical stage in its development. Governed by industrial and commercial organisations of one sort or another, it has no longer any transcendental ideal strong enough to hold

it together, and like all civilisations whose sole object is the accumulation of material welfare, it is rapidly falling from unity into multiplicity and dissension.

A growing interest in Buddhism and the other philosophies of the East, are signs that the sphere of thought is beginning to revolve from East to West, and the visit to Europe of one of the most prominent Buddhists in China. — His Eminence Tai Hsu must be considered as part of this great spiritual movement.

Comparitively little is known of the changes that govern the atmosphere, and still less of the spiritual tides that determine the destinies of men and nations, and yet, when we see a great teacher such as Tai-Hsu coming to us from another hemisphere of thought we seem to feel the wind of a fresh spirit rising on the world.

Buddhism, he tells us, welcomes Science, but nevertheless considers it as a body without spirit, and incomplete, until the higher science of Buddhism has been infused into it.

The foundation of an International Buddhist Institute, in order to bring about the fusion of these two sciences may mark the beginning of a new epoch in which we

are destined to rise to a higher plane of thought.

One of the effects of Science, and by no means the least important, is that the whole of civilisation can now be destroyed in a few weeks, and we have only to realise that the modern world of the West is governed by money and explosives to see where we are drifting.

Buddhism, on the other hand, tends to rescue the world from violence, so that its union with Science is desirable from every point of view, since its intellectual scope and development enables it to meet Science on all points, and complete it as the other half of a sphere.

Tai Hsu, comes to us like another Copernicus, who has discovered the laws of this sphere and its system, and knows the spiritual sun round which it revolves.

Chinese Buddhism, has hitherto been a sealed book to the West, sinologists hardly understand the language in which it is written, and even if they did, it would more likely be a matter of the letter rather than the spirit.

Its influence on Chinese thought can hardly be overestimated, for it has produced some of the greatest poetry and painting

in the world, and given rise to innumerable schools of thought, among which that of the Zen philosophers in many ways marks the highest achievement of the human spirit.

Nourished from the spiritual forces of Nature, among the sacred mountains of China, its inspiration may be of the highest value to the West, which has lost contact with the deeper sources of life.

It will also help to correct many erroneous ideas as to one of the oldest and noblest nations of the world, and show that, in reality, its future tendencies are worthy of its magnificent past.

KUEN-LUN.

LIFE OF HIS EMINENCE TAI HSU

Tai Hsu, the most eminent teacher of Buddhism in recent years, is now forty years old. He was born in the province of Che-Kiang, China, where Buddhism has been deeply rooted, since its introduction from India during the Golden Age of the Táng Dynasty, and has remained intact in spite of the political changes and social revolutions of the past two thousand years. At the age of 16, Tai Hsu entered the Tien Tung Shan Temple where he received the fundamental teachings about Buddhism from the well known monk Pa-Chih, later he went to the temple of the Seven Pagodas where he studied the Buddhist encyclopedia. At the age of 18 he made the acquaintance of the most celebrated Buddhists in China and obtained a profound view of Buddhism from the teachings of the Tien-Tai Sect, and the Hsien-Shu Sect.

From his extensive study of the Buddhist doctrine he realised that speeches and writings are insufficient and inadequate to express the true meaning of Dharma, for words are merely the images

and reflections of things and consequently far removed from the reality.

When he was twenty years old, he co-operated with the monk Pa-Chih in founding a centre for Buddhist education in China, and the following year went to Nanking, where he made many researches in Buddhism with Yang-Jen-Shen, a great Chinese scholar and publisher on that subject. A year later he became chief-abbot of the Pai-Yun-Se Temple near to Canton, and director of the Research Union of Buddhism.

At this time he wrote several important works on the history of Buddhism and the principles of the Buddhist doctrine. During the first year of the Chinese Republic, when Tai-Hsu was 23 years old, he founded the Chinese Buddhist Association with its head quarters in Nanking and its branches in many big cities. The next year he was made editor of the monthly Review of the Association, Acting in this capacity he wrote several essays on the Non-Existence of the Gods and the «true Phases of the Universe», which, since their first appearance have aroused a great interest among the intellectuals of China.

During the next four years (1913-1917) he stayed in the Hsi-Ling Temple on the summit of the Puio Mountain, where he lived the life of a hermit; here he



HIS EMINENCE TAI HSU.

studied all the literatures collected in China on Buddhism, and all the ancient Chinese books as well as most of the European works on logic, philosophy, psychology, and the experimental sciences which had been translated into Chinese at that date.

Such studies combined with a habit of contemplation have given him a systematic and vigorous type of thought.

During four years he published numerous works among which may be mentioned, "New Conceptions about Education", "Evolution rightly explained", "The Absolute Meaning of Philosophy".

When he was 29 years old, he made an extensive trip through Formosa and Japan and upon his return to China determined to raise the spiritual level of his country by his teachings on Buddhism. He founded The Philosophical Society, whose object was to cultivate the faculty of perception, and whose members include many of the leading intellectuals in China. Then followed a lecture tour, in which he visited, Peking, Wuchang, Canton, and most of the other large capital cities explaining to numerous audiences how to acquire a supreme, universal, absolute perception.

By means of the Monthly Review — Hai-Chao-Yin (The voice of the Surge), he was able to spread his teachings.

In 1921, when he was 33 years of age, he founded the Buddhist Academy in Wuchang where students from all the Provinces gathered to learn the theory and practice of Buddhism, and all movements to propagate Buddhism in China to-day are undertaken by graduates from this Academy.

In 1923 Tai-Hsu called a Joint-Meeting of Buddhists in Loshan, a picturesque spot in the hills of Kiangsi, which was attended by many Buddhists from India, Siam, and Japan.

In 1925, he was appointed chief delegate to the East Asiatic Buddhist's Conference in Japan, where he accepted the invitation from His Excellency the German Ambassador to Japan, to make a lecture tour in Germany where he was duly elected to the executive committee of the German Research Academy for Chinese Culture. Before Leaving Tai-Hsu called an Assembly of Buddhist China in Nanking, at which, the organisation of Buddhism and its spread throughout China was duly discussed.

On Aug 11 last, he sailed for Europe in order to carry the light of Buddhism to the West, and impart to all a supreme, universal, and absolute perception of the Cosmos.

LECTURES IN BUDDHISM

THE HISTORY OF BUDDHISM AND ITS RECENT TENDENCIES

1. THE ORIGIN OF BUDDHISM

The Buddhist doctrine as to Man and the Universe is universal and incontrovertible, being the result of what the Buddhas have realised and will continue to realise throughout the extent of time and space.

Buddhism still exists to-day, and if it be diminished to the stature of a grain of sand, nevertheless it is the same doctrine that appeared in India more than two thousand years ago to the enlightened conscience of Çakya-Muni.

For more than two thousand years this teaching has spread throughout the southern and eastern countries of Asia where it naturally met with certain trans-

formations due to differences of climate, race, and custom.

The essence of the Buddhist doctrine consists in an eternal, unlimited, and absolute conception of the spiritual and material phenomena of the Universe — that is, in a true conception of the Universe and of all living beings. It considers that the principles underlying all phenomena are the same as those underlying the human personality, which is the 'spiritual body' of substance. This teaching should be brought to all who have the possibility in them of some day becoming Buddha, and who, by their perfectly enlightened conscience, are able to bring about the unity of substance and create such 'spiritual bodies'.

Orthodox Buddhism does not agree with many of the later doctrines, which are limited in scope and far more arbitrary than the pure doctrine.

The definition is taken from the Chinese texts of the Mahayana sutras, such as the Hua-Yen King, and the Fa-Hua King of Aṣvaghosa, and from the commentaries of the Chinese School.

2. THE EVOLUTION OF BUDDHISM IN INDIA

At the time of Çakya-Muni, the intellectual classes of India were absorbed in

the search for the Atman or real self, and as a result had become egoistic, so that Buddha was almost incapable of spreading the doctrine of the perfectly enlightened conscience. To have withheld his teaching however, would have gone against his desire to enlighten the world and awaken humanity, he therefore taught the doctrine of Hinayana or the Little Vehicle, more suited to the capacity of his hearers and answering the desire of the intellectual classes for liberation.

This school developed the Indian form of Buddhism, and still exists to-day in Ceylon and other of the southern countries of Asia.

At the same time, a few of the leading disciples such as Manjuceri and Maitreya, received the true doctrine from Buddha himself.

The Hinayana doctrine was developed in the Pali language and for the first five centuries only the Sthavirah school made any headway.

The discovery of the teachings of Maitreya, according to Nagarjuna, may be considered as the beginning of the Mahayana doctrine in India, but in organisation and practice it retained the forms of the Hinayana, and was never fully developed in India.

More than a thousand years later the

Hinayana school fell into decadence, and as the Mahayana doctrine was not admitted by the Indian people, one of the most influential Brahmins of the time — Çankara, resuscitated the dying Vedic religion by borrowing from the Mahayana doctrine. The result was a renaissance of Brahminism which inspired the Mahayana Buddhists to found the Tantric school of Buddhism such as it exists to-day in Thibet and elsewhere.

Then followed the decline of the Mahayana doctrine in India so that orthodox Buddhism never became the basis of Indian thought as Buddha had desired.

3. THE EVOLUTION OF BUDDHISM IN CHINA

Chinese Buddhism dates back at least eighteen centuries, and on account of its literature and the extent of its development, it is often considered as the second source of Buddhism.

Japan, Korea, and Annam all received the doctrine from China, and the Thibetan school was also influenced by the Chinese doctrine. If China received the Mahayana and Hinayana doctrines directly from India nevertheless both of them took on some of the characteristics of Chinese civilisation.

(1) The naturalist philosophy of Laotze and Chuang-tzu prepared the Buddhist character to a simple and disinterested way of life. in this way. greatly facilitating the development of such schools as 'San-luen-Tsong', Tien-T'ai Tsong, and Hua-Yen Tsong.

(2) The humanitarian philosophy of Confucius and Mencius developed the social virtues and opened a way to the understanding of the Bodhisattva doctrine.

This is the principle of the Schools of Nan-Chan Lu Tsong, Chan-Tsong-Tson-Lia, Tien-T'ai Tsong, and Hua-Yen Tsong, which combined the principles of the Mahayana and Hinayana doctrines.

(3) Based on the traditions of the Chinese people, which are — a love of life, fear of death worship of the gods, respect of ancestors and the search for happiness — a popular form of Buddhism was developed which is to be found to-day in such schools as Mi-Tsong, Tsing T'ou Tsong, and the Tantric form of belief. This popular form of Buddhism is all that Europeans have been able to study until now.

(4) On the other hand, the elite in China has always risen to the majestic heights of the true doctrine. Initiated to the law of Dharma, it has always

possessed a direct and spontaneous perception of the enlightened conscience of Çakya-Muni, and in this way acquired an eternal and unlimited conception of all phenomena.

Like Buddha himself its object is to become fully enlightened and by a study of the sacred literatures come to explain the real signification of the Universe.

If pure Buddhism has existed in China since the time of Çakya-Muni, this is because the essential doctrine was understood from the very first. During the great periods of the Tang and Sung dynasties, the learned Chinese of the Confucian and Taoist schools gave themselves up to the study of the Dhyana doctrine. Afterwards they returned to their respective schools and founded, on the one hand, the doctrine of the 'Parallel Cults of Soul and Body' and on the other, the philosophy of Li-Hio, which flourished during the Sung and Ming dynasties. In this way the Dhyana school, which is the most original of the Chinese schools of Buddhism, from the time of the Tang dynasty, came to be one of the essential characters of Chinese thought.

In Japan, Buddhism was derived from China, but the mythological cult of ancestors being itself a religion prevented it from becoming universal.

The only forms of Buddhism accepted by Japan were those of the Tsing-Tao-Tsong, the Pi Mi-Tsong, and the Shingon schools, the Tsing-t'ou Chen Tsong, Tai Mi Tsong, and Zeien-Tsong schools being created by the Japanese themselves.

The symbols of the Sun and Lotus were blended, and a fusion of Buddhism and national tradition brought about. Although many changes have taken place in the last thirty years these for the most part consist in the adoption of Christian forms of religious organisation and in the popularizing of Buddhism by a study of its history.

For this reason Japan cannot be considered as a centre of Buddhism in its universal form.

4. THE THREE CENTRES OF CONTEMPORARY BUDDHISM

After a thousand years Indian Buddhism successively oppressed by Brahmanism and Mohammedanism disappeared from the land of its birth, and although many of the sacred sanskrit texts are preserved in Nepal, nevertheless it cannot be considered as a centre of study or pilgrimage.

A branch of the Hinayana school was introduced in the Pali language into Ceylon in the time of Asoka, where it has flou-

rished ever since. It is now the centre of Buddhism for Birmah and Siam etc. and the source at which Western scholars have studied Buddhism.

To-day the Buddhist priests of Ceylon are trying to restore the crumbling ruins of their religion and carry their preaching as far as London. It is to be regretted however, that this form of Buddhism, which is derived from the Hinayana school, has never been able to enlarge its views to the full scope of the Mahayana doctrine.

The second centre is Thibet. Since the foundation of Red Lamaism by Padma-Sambhara, and Yellow Lamaism by Tsong-Kha-Pa, Thibet has been the Buddhist centre for Mongolia and Mandchuria. The original Mahayana texts were preserved in Thibet and the doctrines of the Tantric school and the Mahayana schools can be considered as relatively complete.

Thibetan Buddhism however ignores the Hinayana doctrine, and is limited to the Tantric school which shows traces of Brahminism.

Moreover, this school absorbed many of the religious beliefs in Thibet, such as the Bon Bon religion — a form of demonology, so that the pure doctrine has unfortunately been obscured.

The third centre is China, whose sphere of influence is Japan and Korea.

Chinese Buddhism began by a continuous series of translations which lasted for several centuries. The great Buddhist apostles, who visited China by land and sea, brought with them the sacred writings in Sanskrit and Pali, which they translated and expounded. Later on, Chinese Buddhists such as, Fa Hian, Huan-tsang, Yi-Tsing Sung-Yun and Wu-K'ong, went to India by different routes, where they remained and explored the country from one end to another. They then returned to China with further texts which were translated and explained.

In this way China received all the Buddhist doctrines that existed in India, the Mahayana as well as the Hinayana and the Tantric doctrine.

From this moment Chinese Buddhism began to develop. During the Wei and Tang dynasties thirteen great schools existed, and the Dhyana school, which taught the full meaning of enlightenment came to represent the fundamental spirit of Buddhism.

From a development of the teachings of Dharmakara and Vasubandhu and the assimilation of the Mahayana and Hinayana doctrines the Tien-Tai and Hua-Yen doctrines arose.

Although Chinese Buddhism shows signs of decline during the last few centuries,

nevertheless, the foundations are unshaken, and with the collaboration of Ceylon and Thibet it should be possible to create a world-wide centre.

5. MY WORK IN BUDDHISM

For more than twenty years I have studied the Buddhist doctrines so that I think I may say to-day that I have come to fully realise the teaching of Buddha. That there exist many different schools of Buddhism, as well as other religious, philosophical and scientific beliefs does not discourage me, since after a profound study of all these forms of thought I have been able to grasp the real value of Buddhism, which, so far has been limited by certain prejudices and unable to spread throughout the world. Mechanical progress has brought all parts of the world into closer contact and civilisation tends to become more and more uniform.

It is very necessary then, that the Buddhist doctrine, which is fully capable of uniting all the existing forms of civilisation should spread throughout the world so that it may become a compass, as it were for the human mind.

Buddhist texts, which hitherto were only studied by priests and hermits, are

now in the hands of students, and chairs of Buddhism, which were only to be found in temples or monasteries are now organised by national and provincial authorities.

Doctrines which had once nothing in common with the customs and habits of society have now become the rules of conduct for many a community, and the priests who formerly lived in retirement are now to be found preaching all over the country. A survey of Chinese Buddhism to-day will very soon reveal such changes.

We are living at an epoch when all nations are becoming more and more interdependent and this itself should suffice to show that in reality Humanity is a whole.

To help others, is to help oneself, and to hurt others is to do oneself double injury, and yet, we find all nations to-day living in mutual distrust and preparing war under cover of apparent peace. Such a policy is not only inhuman, it also shows a lack of intelligence.

My humble desire is to teach the Buddhist doctrine in a way that will help to eliminate these abnormal desires and enlighten the world. The Buddhist doctrine alone can make us abandon the false conception that life is necessarily

based on struggle and competition, and bring us to adopt a policy of mutual aid by which we can attain to lasting peace.

Recent tendencies in Buddhism may be resumed as follows :

1. THE BUDDHISM OF LIFE

After taking into consideration the differences existing between the Orient and the Occident we have to bring about the adoption of the ten Buddhist precepts and carry out the good deeds which are so essential to life, developing them in such a way that society may be organised and disciplined according to the Mahayana doctrine, after which we must discover and strengthen our hidden qualities in keeping with the doctrine of the 'Ten Stations' until by degrees we have reached the perfect happiness of enlightenment.

2. SCIENTIFIC BUDDHISM

By experimental induction and theoretical deduction we have to make an impartial and objective study of all phenomena and correct all errors likely to arise from superstition or arbitrary reasoning, and by pointing out the relative character of all beings reveal the secrets of Nature and contribute to the material

progress of the world. Such are the merits of modern science.

Science however, has never been able to perfectly understand the Universe and is always living on hypotheses. As can be shown, Buddhism is the only religion which does not contradict scientific truth, but rather confirms it, and on more than one subject can furnish a point of departure. In this way, the incomplete character of Science is overcome and its progress guaranteed. Therefore, we have to constitute a scientific Buddhism which will be the highest expression of belief of which the intellectual world is capable.

3. 'CONSCIOUS BUDDHISM'

Buddhism being a complete conception of the world, it is possible for Science and Philosophy to be brought into harmony with its different doctrines. Science and Philosophy however, are based on the senses, whereas Buddhism is born from a profound knowledge of the Conscience. Although the personal faculties and particular mental powers of each one of us differs, nevertheless, in every case such a direct perception must necessarily represent the truth of the Universe.

For this reason it is difficult to discover the truth of Buddhism in the theo-

ries and innumerable works that have been written on the subject. To grasp it we must first of all open our heart after the manner of Buddha ; it is enough if we have glimpsed the truth for an instant, and although we cannot expect to attain to perfect enlightenment at once, nevertheless, we shall have the consolation of never again falling into an inferno of darkness. To acquire this faith we must practice conscious Buddhism.

4. UNIVERSAL BUDDHISM

The Orient has a civilisation which tends to develop the sentiments, and Western methods of life tend to develop the Reason. An effort has often been made to bring these two tendencies into harmony, but prejudices of one kind and another have hitherto prevented this.

Let us take the case of philosophy, on the one hand we have experimental philosophy, and on the other, pure metaphysics. The results of experimental philosophy although exact are not constant, and require to be completed by metaphysics. Neither one nor the other can ever reach perfect stability and so the problem will never find a solution.

If we cannot eliminate the obstacles that separate these two great tendencies

how can we expect to bring about the unity of the human race?

Buddhism shows that in developing the sentiments we develop the reason, and vice-versa. By means of the disciplined intelligence, which masters all the elements of differentiation, we have to prove by experience the absolute stability of metaphysics, and by our intellectual intuition resolve in a purely abstract way the relative exactness of experimental philosophy. In this way we shall arrive at a definite solution of the problem.

Buddhism then, is the crucible in which we can realise the fusion of these two main tendencies of civilisation, and the result will be a universal civilisation and a universal philosophy.

Such are the new tendencies of Buddhism, and in order that we may realise many of these conceptions, we have drawn up a project for an International Buddhist Institute. We trust that all who sympathize with us will join in our endeavours.

THE PRINCIPLES OF CHINESE BUDDHISM

The Buddhist doctrine teaches that the Universe is endless, incalculable and has never had a beginning.

The atoms which go to compose it have always existed, whether manifested or not, and all of them contain the possibilities of conscious life.

All that exists is bound up with the law of cause and effect, which is the fundamental law of life, although most men would seem to ignore it.

The Universe is a reservoir of forces constantly manifesting themselves through this chain of cause and effect, and their variations are infinite, as can be seen in the following diagram.

Conscious life may be divided into four great periods, which endlessly repeat themselves upon a circle. A to C, represents the manifestation of physical life,

A is the conception.

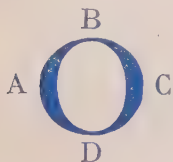
B is life.

C is death.

From C to A life is manifested on another plane, D is the middle point, and C to D, represents the ascent to this higher plane while D to A is the direction of reincarnation.

The elements that compose the life of the body are in course of time decomposed, until they again enter into the composition of another form, and so on ad infinitum.

This operation may be divided into four periods :



A formation of the body.

B life.

C decomposition.

From C to D, matter is in a state of repose, and from D to A the elements are reconstituted, the movement continuing in this way 'a ∞ infinitum'.

Thus we see how life is continuous, not only for the body, but also for the spirit, since all things being in a state of evolution are subject to the law of causality. Here we ought to observe that there are certain boundaries separating the mineral from the vegetable kingdom, and the animal world from the human.

We have not time to go into the first

of these distinctions but will touch for a moment upon the second.

All animals evolve by degress, until eventually they reach the level of human consciousness, and if we wish to maintain our superiority we must retain our dignity and all those qualities which distinguish us from animals.

It is only by following the principles of the Buddhist doctrine that humanity can remain on the higher planes of existence.

Unfortunately, it is by legion that human souls become reincarnated in animal forms, and it is only when Buddhism will have been universally accepted and understood that man will come to surpass himself and enter on to the higher planes of existence.

To this end, we ought to develop sympathy and compassion for every living being that has entered the tide of evolution, and being aware of the dangers that beset us we should never allow our conscience to be darkened until we descend to the animal level of existence.

All human egos are bound together by bonds of sympathy, and each of them radiates a subtle personal influence which reaches all those who can respond to it.

In this way sympathetic and unsympathetic currents are established. Every

particle of matter possesses this property and it is this cohesive force which creates all the different forms which we perceive.

This relation of one particle to another, of one soul to another leaves its trace until the day of perfect union.

Every one of the innumerable souls scattered throughout the universe tends toward a definite goal, passing through an infinite variety of stages, which have neither beginning nor end. These stages may be compared to sheaves placed parallel one to another, and springing from an infinitude of Unconsciousness toward an infinitude of Consciousness and it is but an insignificant part of this perpetual process that we glimpse.

In every ego there are two principle tendencies, which in Chinese are described as the vertical and horizontal. The first, are subjective movements which spring like sparks from the heart of a fire, whereas the horizontal movements take their source in the world without, and may be compared to arrows directed from the external world toward the body. The uncertain character of human nature arises from these two tendencies, since there is a perpetual conflict between our superficial desires and the deeper self which reacts to them. So long as we fail to impose our higher faculties and eliminate

this conflict by supressing the illusions of the senses we shall suffer.

All of us have a tendency to be guided by impulses which have their source in the external world, since it is always easier to drift along with the tide of our impressions.

This activity of the objective mind should be brought under control, and used as a foundation of our higher self, for the senses are nothing more than the organs of our higher nature and should never be allowed to act independently. By identifying ourselves with the body, we have lost sight of the truth, with the result that on all sides fierce struggles have arisen as the result of our egoïsm.

Parties are formed for the defence of common interests, so that the whole world may be said to be composed of coalitions of all sorts, which are always on the alert, and whose object it is to use every possible means to suppress their rivals.

To injure others with a view to profit is to do ourselves double harm, since we are all one in our spiritual essence. If we are the victims of pride and unhappiness this is simply because we are anchored in the narrow limits of our egoïsm, and ignore the law of existence and the link that unites our lives with that of every living being.

Our narrow egoistic desires are at the root of all these Eternal quarrels and discords which beset life.

The Buddhist doctrine springs from the heart of life itself, and by its union of Science and Morality throws light on the deepest truths of existence, and guides and assists us in our evolution.

It teaches us, that besides ourselves, there is an infinite number of souls who have evolved through endless reincarnations. All these souls, according to whether they turn towards good or evil, are constantly changing their direction. As we have already remarked, every ego has, at one time or another, had relations with all that exists whether for good or evil, all these states being linked together according to the law of causality-Karma.

By a gradual evolution, due to the development of the inner life, we come to control ourselves, until, at last, we enter on the steep and rocky way that leads to Nirvana where we will be freed from the uncertainties and illusions of this life.

Buddhism, is not, as is sometimes supposed, a mere collection of dogmas, but the enunciation of one of the great principles of the Universe, which is inherent in every nature, and which, sooner or

later, everyone of us must discover for himself.

Every particle of matter contains this principle and it will be a day of crowning victory, when each has discovered within himself the light that will one day illuminate the whole world.

According to the teaching of Buddha, we are all destined to become Buddhas, sooner or later, and our one object in life should be to reach this perfect enlightenment, by avoiding the stormy oceans of passion and desire and by breaking down the walls that separate us from the world.

This remarkable doctrine, which leads to such vertiginous heights induced the Oriental people to give themselves up to the study of Buddhism.

From the beginning the doctrine was in many ways disfigured and at last split up into two great schools, the Mahayana and the Hinayana, known as the Great Vehicle and the little Vehicle.

The Mahayana doctrine or Great Vehicle constitutes the true teaching of Buddha, but must be considered as inaccessible to the great majority of men, since it is necessary to have entered a very high state of moral elevation before we can follow this path.

By the power of enlightenment a

Buddha can always escape the miseries of reincarnation, and yet, by his compassion for all who suffer and are plunged in darkness and ignorance, he often prefers to return to the world to rescue humanity.

We should refrain from developing certain physical or psychic centres with a view to entering the world of the invisible. First of all we have to develop the moral character, detach ourselves from the denser bodies of desire, and learn to open the inner eye of the mind.

The Buddhist doctrine therefore lies in its conception of the unity of existence and the continuity of life.

Buddha, is not a supernatural but a superhuman being who has realised the truth of all existence, and having conformed his life to it, incites us by his compassion to do likewise.

The Western peoples are so impressed by the discoveries of Science, that they have come to look to it as a solution for every problem.

If Science has opened the minds of men, it is very far from analysing the mysterious principles of life itself. It can never take the place of Metaphysics, of which it is only an organ. How can the contents ever come to hold the container?

This extraordinary progress which

Science has shown in recent years will be all the more valuable to Metaphysics which can explain everything.

Astronomy, physics, mathematics, chemistry, natural history, etc., can all be explained by Buddhism, which has very much to reveal to scientists, and this union of Science and Buddhism is what we most desire.

In the West you know all the objective truth that Science has revealed, we in the East know all the principles, we therefore invite you to join us in the sacred task of uniting body and spirit.



6 . 1

1. SCIENCE

To-day we frequently meet with persons who are doubtful as to the benefits of Science on the ground that it is only interested in the creation of destructive instruments. On the other hand, there are those who tell us that it is the source of all the wonders of our material civilisation and the greatness of the modern world. Although there is much to be said on behalf of both these views, nevertheless the late War would in many ways seem, to confirm the first opinion. The validity of this point of view however depends largely upon the application to which Science is put.

When its methods are accurate, cautious, and thorough, then it can be considered to be irreproachable. Scientific methods may, for the most part, be classified into six categories.

(1) The application of knowledge to a particular sphere, i. e., specialised knowledge. From this specialisation we can acquire new systems of scientific research, as in the case of psychology, where one is mainly concerned with the how and wherefore of mental phenomena.

Physics treat of the laws of matter and energy. Physiology deals with the different organs of the body, such as the respiratory, digestive, and circulatory organs and treats of their functions in a systematic way. Classification and specialisation then, are the methods which Science employs to avoid chaos and disorder, and in fact, are the first steps in any science.

(2) Where an object has to be closely studied with a view to making a discovery or an invention, we have to employ observation, this observation forms the second step.

(3) When general conditions have been observed the next step will be to ascertain more clearly the nature and utility of the object under study, and our observations have to be verified in certain definite ways.

(4) These observations having been verified it will be then possible to draw up an hypothesis and make experiments.

(5) After such observations and experiments have been made, the scientist must again verify his observations by repeating his experiments. For instance, if he sees a rainbow, after the fall of a shower, and supposes that it is due to the refraction of the sun's rays, he will have to approach it and verify if this

is so. When one observation is not enough, he will have to repeat the process a second and a third time and continue again and again until he is certain of his judgement.

(6) When all these methods have been carried out with the same result, then this result can be accepted as a scientific law. Nevertheless, even when a definite judgement has thus been formed, it can later on be controlled by other scientists of another epoch, and in the light of fresh discoveries replaced by a more up to date theory. It is only after such processes have been gone through that we can hope to eliminate all error and establish the truth.

Scientists who strive to reach Truth in order to enlighten the world should be held in the utmost esteem. All scientists however have one shortcoming, and that is to hold that their scientific processes are the only way to Truth, in short, they completely ignore the Buddhist doctrine that all such processes only lead to apparent Truth.

2. THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF SCIENCE

Scientific knowledge has enabled us to to charter and divide the world into separate spheres. In the early days astronomical ideas were based on the theory that the Earth was the centre of our little universe, until Copernicus discovered the solar system, and later on Herschel detected the eight planets and the myriads of fixed stars. Then Newton came forward with his law of Gravitation, and Darwin formulated his principle of Evolution. The first inferred, from the fall of an apple, that there must be gravitation, the second ; argued that since the amoeba had developed into certain forms of animal life, the lower animal might likewise evolve into the higher, and that the ape was our ancestor.

SCIENCE AND BUDDHISM

Scientific knowledge can prove and postulate the Buddhist doctrine, but it cannot ascertain the realities of the Buddhist doctrine.

Scientific discoveries have brought about a certain doubt as to religious evidence. The old gods and religions seem to have been shaken in the wind of science, and religious doctrines have no longer any defence, and the world at large seems to be handed over to the tyranny of the machine and all those monstrous powers to which Science has given birth.

Buddhism, takes quite a different point of view, and holds that Science does not go far enough into the mysteries of Nature, and that if she went further the Buddhist doctrine would be even more evident. The truths contained in the Buddhist doctrine concerning the real nature of the Universe would greatly help Science and tend to bring about a union between Science and Buddhism.

Let us take Astronomy, for instance, In ancient times we only knew the heavens above consisting of the sun, moon, and stars, and the earth beneath, consist-

ing of the mountain, rivers and woods, with humanity in between. In the West, Greek and Christian philosophers put forward the theory that the earth was the centre of the solar system, and continued to base all their scientific theories on this foundation until Copernicus discovered the solar system. To-day, there are those who consider that there is no centre to the Universe, and that space is filled with an infinite number of fixed stars balancing and counterbalancing one another without any master control, so that the theory of fixed astral centres has to be abandoned.

This only confirms the saying of the Buddhist Sutra that "Space is endless and the number of worlds is infinite, for all are in mutual counterpoise like a network of innumerable beads "And again "The world is maintained on a 'wind wheel' (axis) which is suspended in a vast and empty space". These facts which are recognized by Science, are a point of contact between science and the Buddhist doctrine.

To-day the microscope has revealed to us that in every drop of water there are countless numbers of microbes, and in the Inner Canon we are told that "In a single drop of water Buddha can behold eighty four thousand microbes "a fact

which I recognized many years ago with a high power microscope in Prof Yang Jens' laboratory in Nanking. This may be considered as a second point of contact. Darwin traces the evolutionary development of man back to the ape and to still lower forms of life, and although there is some difference between this theory and the Buddhist doctrine which shows that "all life emerges from a certain concentration of matter in the form of a nucleus" both of these statements enunciate a law of change, which is inherent in all forms of life. The physiologist tells us that the body is composed of circulatory organs and that the entire mass is a concentration of innumerable cells growing into and supporting life. Let us compare this with what the Sutra tells us "Consider the body as a concentration of microbes" and in speaking of the beginnings of life we read "Life rises from a nucleus body of microbes" This 'nucleus body' certainly coincides with what the scientists call cells. The materialist tells us that Nature is composed of solids, liquids and gases, and the Sutra speaks of four great forms — solids-liquids, wind and fire, the combination of wind and fire producing all such energies as electricity light, heat, etc. Such points of contact should suffice.

All these statements were to be found in the Buddhist Sutra twenty five centuries ago, before any such scientific discoveries had been made and before anyone spoke of them in any way whatsoever. From this it is evident that the more Science advances the more it will be welcome to Buddhism.

The above indicates the first steps in the Buddhist doctrine or dharma, the next steps are those of illustration.

(a) *By means of superstition.* — Not everyone can be expected to understand all the laws of the doctrinal sphere. For this reason it is necessary to use the term 'Nature' in accordance with peoples beliefs or superstitions which may not be accurate in relation to actual facts. Illustrations and suppositions therefore are necessarily used in line with prevalent ideas or superstitious beliefs. Such was the case in great part during the time when Buddha carried out his propaganda.

(b) *By Expediency.* — He who has attained to "Supreme, absolute and universal perception" must have a real understanding of things which allows him to utilize worldly customs manners and languages so as to give various expressions to what he wishes to propagate.

Even though a person be endowed

with the wisdom of Buddha himself, there are instances where ordinary human thought cannot fathom the depths, where language itself is inadequate, and where it is necessary to resort to expedients by the use of illustrations which are nearer to ordinary life.

Comparison in this case is used to establish certain principles, when comparison is incorrect we shall have false inference if correct, it will give us true inference.

This method is that on which Science Principally relies. The Sutra says — How does the disciple seek the wisdom of Buddha? By the five ways of enlightenment — language, logic, art, and philosophy, i. e., by Science.

By the use of such scientific methods the Buddhist scholar is aided in his research. When we go beyond these methods we find that Science is unable to grasp the reality of the Buddhist doctrine. The reality of the Buddhist doctrine is only to be grasped by those who are in the sphere of supreme and universal perception, in which they can behold the true nature of the Universe, but for this they must have attained the wisdom of Buddha himself, and it is not by the use of science or logic that we can expect to acquire such

wisdom. Science therefore is only a stepping stone in such matters.

The scientist claims that scientific knowledge is the whole truth and stops there, in this he resembles the blind man who after examining the body of a elephant, declared the ear to be a fan, and the tail a broom, If we compare the elephant and all the organs of its body to the Universe, then the blind man may be compared to the Scientist who has never realised an absolute, universal, perception of the universe.

Scientific methods can only corroborate the Buddhist doctrine, they can never advance beyond it.

Here we must refer to two deeply rooted superstitions.

(a) *The Superstition of God or the Restriction of the Ego*, The Ego, or Spiritual Self, known as God is in reality a superstition. The Mahayana doctrine is free from this restriction since it holds that this corporeal form of ours is born from causality and harmony and destroyed or carried on like any other illusion of the Unreal. It may be compared to the interchangeability of the five colours in the flame which flicker here and there in constant change.

(b) *The Superstition of Reality.* — To



BUDDHA.

the Materialist, Reality is Matter, it may also be defined as Law. The materialists' theory reduces all Nature to matter, which is a combination of simple elements which, in their turn, are again reduced to atoms or electrons. This theory has now given way to the dynamic conception in which everything is reduced to energy or movement, so that our whole conception of matter is likely to be changed, since energy is something which is not accessible to the eye or ear. In this way Scientific thought is more and more evolving in accordance with the Buddhist doctrine, and tends more and more to confirm the principles of the Inner Canon. It is only after the Bodhisattva has been convinced of the truth of these methods however that Science can be trusted to observe the effects of different emotional processes on the understanding.

The Saddharma Pundarika Sutra tells us that expedients may be used to convince the multitude, and in many of the other Sutras we find that every subject is fully discussed in a manner surpassing that of Science.

Science therefore, can never be the main support of Buddhism although it may act as a valuable auxiliary and much may be expected from uniting the two methods of investigation.

The principles of Buddhism however may enable us to overcome the restriction of the ego and the law and enable us to enter the realm of perfect wisdom. Those who reach this enlightenment are like the blind man, whose vision is suddenly restored, so that he can see clearly and distinctly all that is around him.

The scientist however, is constantly trying to improve his instruments rather than to perfect his inner vision, this is like depending on our bodily senses.

The main principles of the Buddhist doctrine therefore are 'unscientific' and sweep away all the false conclusions at which Science has arrived, otherwise it would be impossible to overcome ignorance and attain enlightenment.

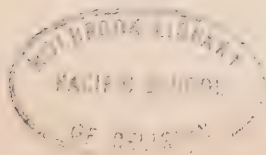
If life however were founded on the six paramitas — the six perfect virtues of the Boddhisattvas, and these in turn, were realised to be in accordance with scientific research, then we might hope to enter into the pure realms of Buddha and emerge from the chaos of fire and brimstone into which we have fallen.

PHILOSOPHY AND BUDDHISM

Philosophy covers such a wide field and has such a vast store of material that even when dealing with a specific branch or phase of it much confusion is likely to arise. To discuss any one philosophical theory at length would take too much time, and such works as the Tripitaka or Three Basket Canon, and the Sutras, are very voluminous since those possessed by the libraries of China, India, Ceylon, Japan and Korea total some 30,000 volumes.

In the Buddhist Institute at Wuchang in China, six or seven professors have been engaged for the past three years in analysing and explaining some of these works, but after all their efforts have only succeeded in drawing up a general outline of these principles.

It is impossible to know every drop of water separately, yet if we could distinguish the characteristics of each we would see that it has a bearing in the composition of the whole world. The Sutra says — "When an atom has been broken open it is possible to produce three million Sutras from it, and if these are well understood they must inspire us."



PHILOSOPHY

In China philosophy is expressed by the term Ming-che (Enlightenment) or Sheng-che (sacred enlightenment).

European philosophy was derived from the Greeks, who, in the early stages of their civilisation thirsted for truth. Long periods of peace and prosperity enabled them to satisfy their desire for intellectual pursuits and the study of social ideals.

Everywhere they grouped themselves together for the purpose of enjoying philosophical discussion and in this way came to found the Academic school of philosophy.

Athens was at that time, not only the political, but also the scholastic centre of the West, where students and philosophers lived together, to enquire into the nature of the Universe and the origin of things. In this way a separate class came to be formed, different from the throng, who were only interested in solving the commonplace problems of food and clothing. These philosophical societies of Ancient Greece may be compared to the Chinese scholars of the Chow Dynasty whose pursuit of Science and Taoism gave rise

to the famous metaphysical schools of the Yi-King, to Laotze and Chuang-tzu, and later to the philosophical schools of the Sung and Ming Dynasties.

In India the number of philosophical schools was even greater, and yet, despite their variety, they resembled one another and may be said to approach the ideas of Western philosophy.

Philosophy, then, may be defined in terms of metaphysics, science, theology, logic, or as a 'love of wisdom'.

HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY. — In order to make an historical survey of Philosophy, we must divide it into three main branches. 1. Indian, 2. Chinese, 3. Western. These three branches are not necessarily derived from the same source. When we come to make a special study of the principles of each we find that their theories are by no means the same.

For the present however we will not deal with Chinese or Indian philosophy, but confine ourselves to a brief summary of Western philosophy, which we may classify into three periods — Ancient, Modern, and Contemporary.

Ancient Philosophy. — Ancient Greek philosophy can be traced back to a study of Nature and natural phenomena. There were those who thought that since water can change into ice or into clouds that

it must be the noumenon of all creation. Later came those who declared that the Noumenon was fire, since fire can be applied to an even greater number of phenomena. These theories were followed by others which culminated in the belief that the Universe was composed of fire, air and water in a state of perpetual combination and disintegration. Later on the Sophists refuted these beliefs and put forward the theory that the source of all things was quantity. According to them the noumenon was something quite different to the idea which the materialist philosophers held. Controversy followed and another group came forward with the idea that the individual himself is the noumenon and that all else is nothing but sensation. According to them it was the sense of sight that perceived whether an object was long, short, round, or square. In this way subjective sensation became the noumenon of the universe, philosophers seemed to have found all they had sought for and their attitude toward social questions became altogether negative. It was at this moment that the great Socrates came forward and upset all these theories. To begin, he sought to bring unity and harmony into thought, on the one hand making a close study of Nature, and on the other applying the

results to moral conduct. In this way he hoped to attain his goal.

From his influence, which was felt by all the thinkers of his time, arose the schools of Aristotle and Plato. The philosophy of Aristotle was one of the most comprehensive that has ever existed comprising all sciences and forms of intellectual activity as may be seen from the following divisions.

	The First Cause.
Metaphysics. . .	Physics.
	Logic.
	Psychology, etc.
	Ethics.
Economics. . . .	Economics.
	Political Science, etc.
	Poetry.
Art.	Rhetoric.
	Sculpture, etc.

“The First Cause” is an expression that was handed down to us from Plato, and can be studied to the full in the Christian science of Theology (the science of God).

Plato and Aristotle used this expression to define the first cause of motion and attraction which was at the origin of creation, and never mention the term in reference to a Creator. The doctrine that fire, air, and water, constituted the

noumenon was no longer held. The definition of 'a first cause' is to be found in the work of Plato himself, and is spoken of as conception, meaning a conception of things that goes beyond sensation. Our sensations are based upon this faculty of 'conception', which is the source of all our knowledge.

This ancient philosophy of the West, is comprised in the work of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, and if the political and ethical institutions of Rome were more imposing their spirit was that of Ancient Greece, which is in some ways indestructible.

Modern Philosophy. — After the introduction of Greek philosophy into Rome, the Roman Empire reached its Golden Age, but as soon as the Christian church began to wield absolute power Greek philosophy lost its influence and became more or less a handmaid to Christianity. The same sort of phenomenon appeared in China during the Han Dynasty, when the Emperor Wu made Confucianism the reigning doctrine, and the other philosophies of the Chow period became mere adjuncts. With the setting in of the Renaissance and the 16th and 17th centuries the methods of theological study underwent a change. Scholars realised that it was futile to attempt to explain the

mysteries of philosophy by the Bible and the canonical books. They declared that Philosophy was something quite apart from Christianity something concerned exclusively with philosophical research. Each of the great philosophers of the epoch put forward his own theory which developed into the three well known Schools.

The Continental School according to Descartes.

The Empirical School according to Bacon.

The Rational School according to Kant.

The Philosophy of Descartes is based upon thought and claims that the Universe is a product of two factors. subject and object, the object being an illusion while the 'ego' alone is true. Descartes summed up his thought in the phrase. *Cogito ergo sum*. 'I think, therefore I exist' for he supposed that wherever there was thought there was existence. This is known as the Rational School of the Scholastics.

The Empirical School of Bacon, like the old systems, relies upon sensation and lays stress upon the study of Nature, considering that only such experience is real, in this way it developed a sort of empirical philosophy.

The Rational School of Kant is a combination of these two schools, and gives

great importance to the investigation of knowledge. In his *Critic of Pure Reason* Kant discusses the twelve abstractions — Time, Space, Method, Discrimination, Difference, and asks — ‘What is knowledge’ He concludes that the reality of the Noumenon cannot be known, and that all we can know is our thought of the Universe.

In this way both the Idealist and the Materialist stands by his theory, while the third school combines the two tendencies and attempts to give a general definition of Western philosophical thought.

Philosophy however in developing along these lines has departed from its original aim, which was to discover the ‘noumenon’ of the Universe, and later followers of the Greek Schools found themselves at a loss to continue the old line of thought.

Contemporary Philosophy. — Herbert Spencer then came forward and combined all forms of scientific thought into what he named ‘synthetic philosophy’ In his treatise called ‘Knowledge’ he points out that there are perceptible phenomena and imperceptible noumena. Perceptible phenomena have all become the subject matter of Science but imperceptible noumena belong to the unknown. Since

Spencer's theories reached their limit we have had Dewey's 'Practical Philosophy' which goes a step further and casts aside the Noumena as a negligible quantity. His argument is that 'Truth is something which ought to be applied to all human activity. If the nation is disturbed we must try to settle the disturbance, and if society has evil elements in it, then, we must try to eliminate them. When we succeed in our attempts we have attained truth, such truth being like a tool which may be taken up or discarded as is necessary.

Why then try to investigate the noumena of the Universe? Noumena can never be fully understood and therefore it is futile to try and explain them. In this way the Practical School of philosophy discards the Noumenon, which is the only real thing worth investigation. Here philosophy seems to arrive at an 'impasse' and Science begins to monopolise all, Henri Bergson however postulated that if the Noumenon cannot be known, then philosophy is quite unnecessary, and he showed how we can know the Noumenon by our faculty of 'Perception', which is a direct form of knowledge resulting from contact with a stimulus, and one which avoids all intermediary phases of thought. Whenever

we perceive an object and do not judge it according to any previous experience then that object can be identified with the noumena of the Universe.

On the other hand when knowledge is the product of thought and experience and has passed through an association of ideas, it is far removed from perception.

In this way, Bergson opened up a new way of thinking based on the science of biology and psychology.

Bertrand Russell took mathematics as his starting point and laid importance on 'mental analysis' and 'material analysis' carrying them to their extreme limits. According to him the basis of the Universe is motion and there is no fixed or stable body in any part.

If we study the ancient, modern and contemporary philosophies of the West we shall meet with many brilliant minds and remarkable discoveries, but to fully realise the importance we would have to examine each of these schools in detail. In the following table an attempt is made to give a general outline of these systems.

Judging from these tables we are entitled to conclude that as regards the noumenon of the Universe, every philosopher has his own point of view.

Scope and Aspect	{	Ancient Schools ^a	{	Plato, Aristotle, etc.	The Comprehensive School.	Period of greatest scope.	Noumenon not understood.				
		Modern Schools		{				Descartes. Bacon. Kant.	The Continental School. The Empirical School. The Rational School.	Science and Philosophy separating more and more.	Noumenon studied but not well understood.
		Contemporary Schools						{			
		2. Noumenon.		{					Multi-criterion.....	All elements and substances combined. Mind and matter. Materialism, Realism. David Hume of the British empirical school and the modern practical school claim that outside of phenomena there is no noumenon. Bertrand Russell's view somewhat similar.	
Duo-criterion.....											
Mono-criterion											
Non-criterion.....											
3. Cognition or Knowledge.	{	Sensation	The dogmatic or empirical school. The rational school. Combination of idealism and analysis. Bergson's Theory.								
		Conception									
		Reason									
		Intuition									

PHILOSOPHY AND BUDDHISM

Philosophy has always relied upon one or two leading hypotheses to solve its problems. This method however has always led to controversies and fallacies.

To-day, many of the ancient theories are altogether discarded and replaced by entirely new principles, and yet, despite these changes, there is little real progress to be registered. In their search to discover the origin of the Universe these schools of thought resemble the Buddhists in their search for the Absolute Consciousness.

Philosophers however, in their effort to discover the noumena of the Universe by means of hypotheses, may be said to resemble the blind man and the elephant, for being unable to grasp the doctrine of the 'Ego and the Law' our knowledge can never be real. Philosophy then, is derived from false perceptions and has been drifting away more and more from the realm of absolute universal perception. At the root of all these systems there is a lack of clear insight and unless some change takes place in the erroneous conceptions on which they are based,

humanity will never emerge from the darkness in which it is plunged. All these theories on mind, matter, and energy are based upon law, which is erroneously supposed to be part of the noumenon itself.

When conceptions and perceptions, are seen in a haze how is it possible to explain the nature of the Universe? It is as if we wished to judge the ocean from a drop of water.

What we have obtained by erroneous perception can never be permanent, the mistake however is not in the philosopher's desire to know the noumena of the universe but in their methods which are fallacious. In the Buddhist doctrine the truth about the noumena is made self evident, and all error is eliminated from the very start.

It is by experience that one gradually comes to acquire insight and conviction which, in the end, lead to a conscious awakening. If philosophy were to set aside all the errors and defects in its thinking then the universe would be revealed without a mask. By prolonged meditation, by intelligence and wisdom a sudden awakening may be brought about which in the end will lead to an enlightened understanding of the Creation. Such an entrance into the realms of Buddha

would be a revelation for the philosopher who would come to see that.

(1) Buddhism is a clear perception of things freed from all illusion.

(2) Philosophy is an erroneous perception based on illusions.

LEARNING ITS PURPOSE AND METHOD

Apart from the case where we are forced to learn, most of us have a definite purpose in the pursuit of learning. With the vast majority however this purpose is the desire to get a living. We cannot find any fault in this, since it is in great part a necessity, and yet learning should not be confined to this purpose since if it were, no fresh knowledge would ever be needed. There must be some other object then, besides this. Some will consider that it lies in the desire for making a reputation, this may be so in some cases, but not in all, for there are those who have suffered cold and starvation and undergone persecution and martyrdom for the sake of learning. Generally speaking however, man is gregarious, and loves to be governed by the ways of society. Confucius is a case, since both he and his disciples made learning their sole aim in life with no other purpose than the bettering of society. The object then of such persons is to acquire happiness, without which learning itself would be meaningless.

We are told that man has a restless nature which compels him to turn in all

directions to seek knowledge and power, without experience and a proper foundation it is a question whether man can acquire power, for it is only by the realisation of truth that we can acquire true happiness, knowledge and power. True happiness is N'rvana and true knowledge and power is the result of bohdi — or enlightenment. The true end of all learning then, may be identified with the purposes of Buddhism so that. We should pursue learning in accordance with the Buddhist dharma.

We will try to define truth as follows..

(1) Knowledge is the understanding of the true principle and fullness of the doctrinal nature. This is primary wisdom and the power of reason without discrimination.

(2) Power is the verification of definite facts. This is secondary wisdom and the power of reckoning with real discrimination.

(3) The character, principle, and facts of the fulness of verified truth must be made manifest. This is what is called "Supreme absolute universal perception".

In this pursuit of truth which constitutes the sole aim of all learning we have to face.

(1) The difficulty of the pursuit of learning.

(2) The intermediary steps in the pursuit of learning.

The difficulty of learning arises from the fact that it is not easy to discern true knowledge, because of the uncertainty of its sources, which are of three kinds, (1) Perception (2) Inference (3) Acquired knowledge. The highest of these forms is that of Perception, since it is the foundation of all our mental activities and the basis on which it is possible to build new structures. In other words if we possess the inner root of knowledge it is possible to branch out in new directions. As in a dream, our ego may be stimulated by illusion, so the waking consciousness may produce its speculations from a misconception of facts and in this way come to faulty conclusions, since thought and reflection are based upon our perceptions which are used to approach truth but cannot lead to absolute truth.

Then we have truth which comes to us through hearsay, that is through others, and which can never be exempt from error, for without true perception there can be no true knowledge or acquisition of truth, but only error which is of no value.

We have to depend then, upon our instinctive nature which tends to true perception and on the judgement of

those who have already had true conceptions and are able to instruct us—these are the Buddhas. When we rely on the teaching of Buddha we can attain to an understanding of right principles and be able to use these principles in forming a correct judgement. When we listen to the words of others however and add our own conceptions then we are in danger of losing ourselves in fallacy, of all sorts.

After such instruction, right thinking will become almost automatic with us so that we shall be able to depend upon our true perceptions and to emerge from the valley of darkness and illusion, into the fullness of light.

When this final fullness has been attained it can be said that the object of learning will have been achieved for true knowledge and true happiness will have been attained.

There are five methods of learning therefore, which we may sum up as follows.

(1) To make selections from the most perfect sayings of the great teachers.

(2) In accordance with such instruction to cast off all erroneous conclusions and to develop correct thinking.

(3) In accordance with such correct thought we have to develop the habit

of forming true conceptions of all we hear and see in daily life.

(4) In accordance with these true conceptions we have to destroy any vanity that remains and make an effort to reach the final manifestation of truth.

(5) Once we have reached this realm of true perception we should use our efforts to instruct others and lead them towards an awakening.



THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

Before we begin to study any subject we must first of all recognize that it contains truth. Without we can recognise the existence of such truth, all our research will be in vain. Let us therefore try to define Truth.

(1) *Universal Truth.* — Truth must be something universal, something which can be applied in all cases and all places, since that which is true in one place and not in another, cannot be considered as Truth.

(2) *Permanent Truth.* — Truth must be always the same. When we are told that certain things are true at one time and not at another we may be sure that they are not true, for Truth can never be limited to a certain epoch but is permanent.

These characteristics being established, we should enter upon our study with the set purpose of seeking Truth. If Truth however be a thing which is universal and permanent there can be no gain in studying it and no loss in neglecting it, since that which can be gained or lost is neither permanent nor universal. We should ra-

ther therefore seek for enlightenment through which Truth can be perceived, since the depth and height of our wisdom will depend largely upon such enlightenment.

We require the perfect wisdom of Buddha if we wish to acquire such knowledge.

VARIETY OF TRUTH

(a) *According to Racial Difference.* — Each race has its own sense of Truth which it supposes to be universal. This may be divided into two classes.

(1) *Truth which is not human.* — This refers to the animal kingdom, each species of which possesses its own special Truth.

(2) *Human Truth.* — This is Truth which is seen, heard, and known by humanity in general, and which may be subdivided into.

(1) *Instinctive Truth*, which is derived from our faculties of seeing and hearing. What another man sees, that, I can also see, and what another man hears that I can also hear. Such knowledge is akin to that of the new born child who knows how to take milk instinctively.

(2) *Truth acquired by habit and custom.* Certain truths have been acquired through habit and custom in different places and at different times. For instance, every nation has its own particular manners or customs which it recognizes as heaven born even though other countries do not recognise them. This is what constitutes

the difference between nations, and yet in the light of Buddhism, such truth is only an illusion.

(b) *Truth that is based upon Theory and Principle.* — Theoretical truth is a more advanced type of truth which through observation ascertains the error of certain recognised truths. In the Middle Ages the theory that the Sun was smaller than the earth and turned round the earth was thought to be a scientific truth. Later on however Astronomers established another truth based on the principles of Astronomy.

Theoretical Truth can be divided into four types.

(1) *Scientific Truth.* — This lays stress on perception and experience and is derived from analysis and synthesis.

(2) *Philosophical Truth.* — This is based on reason and thought and its theories and principles are derived by inference.

(3) *Religious Truth.* — This claims the existence of a single god (God or Jehovah) as the supreme being and ruler of the universe.

(4) *Moral Truth.* — Religious truth seeks to attain the supernatural objectively, while moral truth lays stress on the discipline of the mind and heart — the Ananda school of philosophers in India

for instance, or the Confucianist and Taoist schools of China who discipline themselves by meditation, and claim that they have attained truth through conscious experience and not through the organs of sense.

These four types of truth, when judged in the light of Buddhism, may be considered to be slightly awakened and yet are still labouring in a dream although on the verge of awakening.

(c) *Truth attained through the wisdom of the Holy One.* — By the 'Holy One' is meant he who has entered into the sacred realms of Buddha, and has attained that unbounded wisdom by which one is freed from the sufferings of life and death. The truth attained in this state of unbounded wisdom cannot be discerned by an ordinary person nor can it be divulged to those who are not freed from the sufferings of life and death. There are three ways to attain this true wisdom.

(1) *Renowned Truth.* — This refers to the words pronounced by Buddha "Suffering and its cause and the way that leads to the cessation of suffering". If one really understands to what this refers he will find a way to cut off the sufferings of life and death. 448

(2) *Self realised Truth.* — This refers

to knowledge which springs from our own observation of the "laws of the twelve associations of life".

(3) *Mahayana Partial Truth*. — This is the partial truth attained by those who have reached the Mahayana state.

If the above three be judged according to the wisdom of Buddha then they are nothing but the illusions of a state of semi-consciousness. Those who adhere to the 'Renowned truth' know that the universe is but an empty illusion with no matter and no ego. The course of life and death through which an ordinary human being passes is accompanied by illusions and governed by laws or worldly superstitions which have taken hold on the ego. Such persons are in darkness and unable to act freely or liberate themselves from the cause of suffering. For this, they must first of all know that the cause lies in the fact that they have allowed the illusions of the world to take hold of them, and that if they wish to free themselves from the clutch of these illusions they must discipline themselves in such a way as to overcome them.

Truth attained by Buddha through Absolute and Universal Knowledge. — He who is capable of consciously discerning all things is called Buddha, and has a perfect understanding of truth. In other words,

what the holy one through his unbounded wisdom perceives to be truth Buddha likewise recognises as truth. Such truth however cannot be easily comprehended by common knowledge, since absolute, universal, perception has not yet been attained. When such perception has been attained there will be universal knowledge and permanent understanding. The Bodhisattva or 'holy one' who has not yet attained Buddha-hood only possesses partial knowledge, but from this he may advance and become the equal of Buddha himself. For, it has been said that Humanity as a whole, has the possibility of attaining Buddhahood and universal perception.

From such universal, absolute perception, two truths are derived.

(1) *Truth manifested by the Bodhisattvas.* — This is truth which is only slightly at variance with the truth shown by Buddha himself.

(2) *The complete truth as declared by Buddha himself.* — This refers to the fact that Buddha has a universal comprehension of those things which the host of bodhisattvas cannot understand. If there is this difference with the bodhisattvas how much greater is it with ordinary beings. If we desire such universal wisdom we must seek for learning.

Under the three headings of (1) the Scientist, (2) the Bodhisattva, (3) the fully Conscious one — truth is really approached. The first possesses common knowledge and clings to ordinary sentiment and therefore cannot attain to absolute truth, the last two, the Bodhisattva and the Fully Conscious One, have emerged from contact with the world and entered the Buddhist dharma where they have attained truth.

THE WAY TO TRUTH

Since we recognise the existence of truth, we must learn to seek its manifestations. There are two ways in which evidence may be sought (1) By common knowledge (sense perception) or learning (scientific and religious knowledge) both of which lead to the elementary truths of Buddhism (2) By the knowledge of the Buddhist scholar and his advance into the realms of pure Buddhism in the manner of the Holy One and the 'Conscious One.' The methods are those of discipline, meditation, and inspirational wisdom and our minds and bodies are the instruments of such manifestations.

CAN WE UNITE KNOWLEDGE, CONDUCT AND POWER

Whether we can unite knowledge, conduct, and power depends upon the judgement. All sentient beings have either superior knowledge and irregular conduct, or have good conduct and little knowledge or power. Some unite knowledge and conduct but are without power; others, have power and good conduct but lack knowledge and wisdom.

Human beings differ in character as they differ in physiognomy, which is unavoidable. This means that their tendencies in the pursuit of learning are also different, some laying stress on knowledge, others paying more attention to conduct, while others set their mind to acquire power. Plato therefore divided men into three classes.

(1) Intellectuals; who are not concerned with making a living (2) Guardians; the strong and brave who defend the nation but have no intellectual resources, (3) the Peasants who strive to sustain life but are without knowledge. A perfect man however, should combine the three — knowledge, conduct and power,

for only then can he show the real value of his knowledge. Otherwise combining knowledge and force, they lack conduct and are unable to use their power and knowledge to any good purpose. In such cases it were better for these persons to have been without this power and knowledge. Then, there are those who have knowledge and good conduct, yet they lack the power to put such conduct and knowledge into effect, and the result is empty talk and vain discussion. Again there are those who combine power and conduct but they lack real knowledge, are ignorant of many things, and though full of enterprise they will never be able to act rightly. All the great men of the past whose names have come down to us with undying fame, and who have bequeathed everlasting works have united in themselves these three factors, which in Buddhism are known under the name of — realm, conduct, and effect. True knowledge is wisdom and Buddha is the embodiment of that wisdom whereby we may hope to reach the realm of 'supreme, absolute, and universal knowledge'. With Buddha, morality conforms with absolute knowledge so that he is known as 'He who abounds in ten thousand virtues'. Since the Buddhist doctrine embodies absolute knowledge with perfect virtue,

it is natural that it should yield the 'effect' of beauty and power, and so we are told "that by his undaunted power and immeasurable goodness he is able to guide all humanity".

People often consider that talent and genius are 'heaven born', but Buddhism does not take this point of view, and holds that genius is the result of innate and acquired capacity. Those who are born with this innate ability to learn will easily acquire the habit, while others will require to make greater effort. By effort and application we can acquire such gifts, which are not necessarily 'heaven born'.

The more we learn, the more will we acquire the habit of learning, and the greater will be our skill.

It has been said — "If the mind that is capable of knowing could be brought into contact with the thing known the result would be truth "and again. When the mind can conciliate the world without with the ego within, so that there is no clash between the self and others, then there is goodness, and since truth and goodness exist, power must exist." Confucius considered that wisdom, charity, and courage were the three qualities necessary to acquire virtue. Understanding means wisdom, fairness means charity,

and power means courage, and if these three qualities be combined then virtue will result. In the Great Sun Scripture (Maha Vairocana Sutra) it is said. "The mind of Bodhi is the cause and mercy is the root, for Bodhi is consciousness itself" This consciousness is not the partial consciousness of the bodhisattvas, but that of Buddha himself and is reflected in all laws. Since Buddha is the incarnation of Great Mercy, his conduct must be virtuous and his influence strong enough to lead all sentient beings. These three qualities-knowledge, conduct, and power cannot be united by ordinary persons, but only by the Enlightened and Conscious One, that is by Buddha.

IS THE UNIVERSE PROGRESSING ?

For a century past the theory of evolution has been the greatest factor in the intellectual world. Since theories are constantly changing, that of evolution is giving way to-day before the theory of involution (degeneration), and although, involution and evolution express two diametrically opposed ideas nevertheless all creation tends to change and nothing is stationary. and since both phases belong to the law of change they are really not so different as we imagine. The question then, is whether all this change which is going on in the world is for the better or for the worse.

NON-BUDDHIST THEORIES

Nihilism and Materialism. — Materialism assumes that Matter is the basis of the Universe. The Indian atomic theory states that "Earth, water, air, and fire", may be divided into infinitely minute particles until they are no longer divisible. The earth and the smallest grain of sand are alike in that both are formed from these minute particles."

And we are told that. "When two atoms come together to produce another body, it, and the parent particles make three particles. When these three particles join with another three particles they produce a seventh particle, which may be measured according to the scale of the six particles. In this way thousands of worlds are formed and mankind itself created. This is but another way of expressing the Theory of Evolution. In the West the materialist school tells us "In the beginning there existed minute particles called electrons which were scattered throughout space, and by their energy created the sun and all the multitude of stars. This world is but one of the innumerable worlds of space on which vege-

tation and animal matter have grown, and man a conscious being has been produced. To consider that man is of the same species as the ape or that he has evolved from still lower forms of life is only one way of stating this process of the earth's formation, since the same particles of matter constitute all living forms.

What we have to consider is the degree of development that has been reached by each species. If we come to scrutinize man individually we see that after a few decades his body is broken up and he passes away into nothingness.

His mental life does not differ greatly from that of matter or the movements of machinery, and his thoughts are constantly rising from the past toward the future, so that his ideas are ever rushing one against another, and there is nothing there which seems to indicate any more permanence than the clouds in heaven.

All that we see in the passing away of the old and the advent of the new, the continual change on land and sea and in the atmosphere, is due to the collection and dispersion of matter. In this theory there is no place for the conception of God, for everything goes to prove the extinction of form and the inexistence of an after-life.

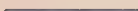
Such is the Nihilist Theory.

Spiritualism and Idealism. — According to this theory God exists, the soul governs the body and mind is distinct from matter. Matter is but a creation of the Mind since Spirit creates all things. From the materialist's point of view, this theory is one of involution. The Indian brahman tells us that Heaven created all things by the creation of two similar beings, whose progeny became more and more degenerate. So that lust arose and man gradually fell until he became a brute, and all the changes and transformations in this world are the same. Plato, for instance, says that in the beginning all was pure and that a gradual degeneration took place. Christianity teaches that God created two beings in his own image, who dwelt in the Garden of Eden, where they committed sin and fell to the level of human beings. All these theories resemble one another, and the Brahman who prays to Brahma, and the Christian who seeks to enter heaven are both trying to regain the original state, from which they have been separated by the retrogression of all things.

In China, both Confucius and Laotze put forward the same theory of the need of a restoration and taught that Man differs from God by reason of his form but resembles him by his spirit. The body

which differs from God undergoes transformation and decay but the spirit being like Him exists eternally.

By good conduct and spiritual devotion the religious minded man tries to deliver himself from the limitations of the body so that his spirit may be all the more divine.



BUDDHISM

(a) *Doctrine of Apparent Similarity.* — There are two theories.

(1) This resembles the materialistic theory already mentioned. The Buddhist doctrine does not deny causality but delivers us from fatality. Those who do not understand fatality and try to imitate the Buddhist doctrine by their denial of causality become Nihilists.

These constitute a school of corrupt Buddhists holding theories similar to those of the materialist schools of the West. By the study of geology and by archaeological research they have revealed many ancient forms of life and determined the cycles of time. Viewed in this light they have shown that periods of biological development are always succeeded by periods of destruction, and the present development of mankind would seem to indicate the gradual approach of destruction. In many respects their theories may be said to resemble the suicidal theories of many Western thinkers.

(2) The spiritual school claims that man originally fell into this state of bodily

existence by false perception and thereby lost the power of enlightenment.

Nevertheless they hold that humanity can by discipline be restored to its original splendour. This theory then, may be considered to be very near to the Pure Buddhist doctrine.

(b) *Pure Buddhist Doctrine.* — This may be divided into two categories.

(1) *The Cyclic Theory.* The organic world has four cyclic periods. (1) achievement (2) rest (3) destruction (4) emptiness. In the world of sentiment there are four states (1) the original (2) the death state (3) the after state (4) the life state, all revolving in accordance with the twelve causalities of the Hinayana and Mahayana schools. From a state of "no enlightenment to old age and death" they turn through "old age and death to no enlightenment". Like a circle there is no end and nowhere a temporary break or interruption. Chuang-tzu, in one of his commentaries raises the question "is there no such thing as heaven and earth"?, and Confucius replies. "The past is the same as the present, for there is no past and no present, neither is there a beginning nor an end" which is no other than the same cyclic idea.

From this point of view then, what the world calls evolution or involution pro-

gression and retrogression is in reality only a cyclic movement.

(2) This is the theory of detachment from wordly destruction and the attainment of Eternity. The state where all living beings are born to live and die is called the state of the "mundane sphere. "Detachment from this mundane sphere means the destruction of this cyclic state of creation and the attainment of the evolutionary state of Eternity which is free from all limits. Such a detachment can only be acquired by self discipline, which in the end, must lead to a state of goodness. Having attained to goodness while in the mundane sphere it is possible to acquire it when detached from this sphere and once we are disentangled from the world it will be possible to experience the "nature of Eternity".

As to the laws of this "detachment" they constitute the Pro-triyana doctrine and the non-Mahayana doctrine. This detachment from the cycle of life and death belongs to the doctrine of the "Reversion of destruction".

The non-Mahayana doctrine confirms the law of the Bodhisattvas and is the theory of evolution.

This is the positive theory of evolution which claims that "direct entrance into Buddhahood results from fullness and

perfection and that no farther advance can be made in this state since it is without change and is known as “the state of fullness and eternity”.

Detachment from the world.	{	Pro-Triyana. Reversion of Destruction.	{	Cause.	State of Evolu- tion.
		Non-Mahayana.		Effect (result).	State of Fullness and Eternity.

According to the canonical teachings when we are in the state of “true Dharma” we are able to realise that there is neither progression nor retrogression, evolution nor involution, non-progression nor non-retrogression, and that there is neither cyclic revolution nor cyclic non-revolution. We will meet with hundreds of phrases in which the affix “ non ” is used in reference to all laws and all forms to show that a state of permanence and universality cannot be expressed otherwise.

CONCLUSION

We arrive therefore at the following conclusions.

(1) The world neither progresses nor retrogresses but revolves i, e, there is neither evolution nor involution but revolution.

(2) A portion of the Non-Mahayana has become detached from the mundane sphere so that the Bodhisattvas and their laws are in a state of real evolution.

There are many who misconstrue the idea of cyclic revolution and obstinately hold to one point on which they imagine the whole wheel is pivoted.



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